

The Parliamentary Skills Event– House of Commons Terrace Pavilion, today 1pm

Business and colleges ask for MPs support to work together

Employers and colleges are today calling on MPs to support a new initiative that for the first time unites the demand and supply of education and training.

“Unified to Deliver”, a new alliance between colleges and businesses will mean that workforce training can now be decided and delivered directly. The partnership between employers and college principals will truly demonstrate “demand-led” skills policy in action.

MPs are attending the launch event at the House of Commons today and are being asked to support the coalition by backing partnership initiatives in their constituencies.

The alliance between the Skills for Business network (SfBn) and the Association of Colleges (AoC) is officially endorsed by John Denham, Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills.

David Hunter, CEO of Lifelong Learning UK and chair of the skills coalition said: “It brings together employers, through their Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), who can identify and articulate their skill needs, with college Principals who have the expertise to deliver the training to meet those needs.”

One example of productive partnership is the link between luxury leather-goods company Mulberry, based in the South-West, and Bridgwater College, which resulted in a new apprenticeship qualification specifically designed to meet Mulberry’s needs.

Faced with difficulties recruiting new employees with the skills they needed, Mulberry approached Skillfast-UK, the SSC tasked with supporting businesses in the fashion and textiles sector, to help develop the skills of their workforce. All SSCs have powers to create new vocational qualifications or revise existing ones, based on employer needs, and Skillfast-UK set up the partnership with Bridgwater College.

For press enquiries please contact:

To speak to David Hunter, chair of the skills coalition, contact Zoe Vipond, Communications Officer on 020 7936 5741 zoevipond@lluk.org

Notes for editors

1. Lifelong Learning UK is one of 25 sector skills councils that make up the Skills for Business Network, set up by employers to raise skills levels among the workforce as a whole through better training and development. See: www.lluk.org
2. The lifelong learning sector has more than a million employees across the UK working in community learning and development (including youth services and family education), further education, higher education, libraries, archives and information services and work-based learning.



Skills for Learning Professionals

3. LLUK aims to encourage teachers, trainers, librarians and other staff to gain new skills and qualifications so that they offer a better service to young people, adult learners, employers and the wider community.
4. LLUK also promotes lifelong learning as a career so that employers in the sector have less difficulty recruiting and retaining staff.
5. In addition to developing sector-wide occupational standards and qualifications frameworks, LLUK also produces labour market intelligence so that lifelong learning employers can identify skills gaps and shortages among their own workforce.